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Highlights of Lutheranism in  
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HIGHLIGHTS OF LUTHERANISM IN HANCEVILLE, ALA., CULLMAN COUNTY

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RANCEVILLE RATES SECOND IN TOTAL POPULATION TO CULLMAN

taken from

the Anniversary Edition of the Cullman Tribune, Volume 65,  
No. 30, printed September 28, 1930



## HANCEVILLE RATES SECOND IN TOTAL POPULATION TO CULLMAN

### Floating Boundary Line Placed County Seat in Cullman

Towns have destinies just as people have, and strange to tell make destinies in much the same way.

A little over sixty-seven years ago a civil engineering corps veered East on the top of Sand Mountain to escape too much tunneling and too heavy grades for the L & N Railway. This change of routes brought them through this section of the county. Then Hanceville was born!

It was called "Gilmer" then. The first settler was A. S. Martin, Mrs. Nettie Turner's father. After Mr. Martin came P. H. Kinney, the first Post Master, changed the name of the town by order of the Post Office Department because there was already a Gilmer in the state. Mr. Kinney called the town Hanceville in honor of his father, Mr. Hance Kinney.

Judge James Holland came next and bought the first piece of property ever sold in Hanceville. He married Miss Charity Watson and their son Emmet was the first child born in the town. Judge Holland, Justice of the Peace, performed the first marriage rites in the history of the place. The couples were Miss Martha Martin and Pink Callahan; Miss Octavia Martin and Joe Fox.

The first German settlers were Nick Schlaf, Jim Montgomery, Tom Hoffman and others. All these came in soon after the L & N Railroad was completed in 1874. The first operator of the little depot was Neal Brown of Nashville, Tennessee. The first agent was George Hanlin, who cast the first Republican vote ever polled in the town.

The Catholic Church was the first one built here, followed by the Methodist. A little school was built in 1873 with Proffessor Richardson as the first teacher.

About this time the people began to ask for a county. Cullman County had not yet been formed. The territory now comprising Cullman was then parts of Blount, Winston and Morgan. John G. Cullman was the father of the movement. Billie Crump, so well known and beloved in Blount County, was in the Legislature as Representative, and Bret Randolph of Blount Springs was Senator. Just here we see the shaping of the destiny of the town, and how near Hanceville came being the county seat of the new county--and missed it.



### Two County Town Awhile

P. H. Kinney and Tom Hoffman were sent to Montgomery to look after the interests of the new county in general, and Hanceville's fate in particular. But against them they had Bret Randolph, who was working for Blount Springs, and Phil Musgrove, who owned a section of land at Cullman. Politics carried the day, as usual, in Montgomery, and it was settled that the southern line of the new county should be the line between Sections 20 and 29, which cut the town in two and lost it half of its votes, put the Martin entry into Cullman County and left the Kinney entry in Blount County, and this prevented the possibility of Hanceville's getting the County Seat. This township had the larger population at this time and would have out voted Cullman township. Mr. Musgrove knew this, and saved his own property in Cullman by forwarding the interests of that town. So much trouble arose to the citizens because half the town was in one county and half in the other, that a petition was presented the Legislature to move the county line one mile North or South, and after some more politics, the line was moved one mile North, putting all of Hanceville in Blount County. Later Representative S. J. Griffin of Cullman and Senator R. L. Hipp succeeded in passing a bill to submit the present line to a vote of the people on what is now known as the cut-off, and Hanceville, with her neighbor, Garden City, and her county friends voted to go back to Cullman County.

Thus ended the once chance our town has had to be a great county seat.

Hanceville once had a weekly paper called, "The Hanceville Hustler" with Mrs. Julia H. Gillespie as Editor and Mrs. Bess Morrow, now of Cullman, the local editor.

The pioneer residents who are still living in the community are Miss Maymie Allred, Mrs. Fred Gibbs, and Will and Alvin Jones.

### The Town Today

The population of Hanceville is approximately 800. It is one of the best towns of that size in the South. It has five churches and a fine High School and Grammar School, which is being improved every day. The total enrollment of the two schools is 650.

There are a number of business houses here and all of them seem to be successful. New homes have been built recently and several will be built in the future. Hanceville



has prosperous and contented people. And why not? Its farmers are of the best class of citizenship and most of them own their own farms. Its lands are productive and grow everything necessary to comfort and pleasure. Its strawberries are known all over the country as exceeding in size and flavor most any to be found.



HISTORY OF THE HANCEVILLE TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

taken from

the Anniversary Edition of the Cullman Tribune,  
Volume 65, No. 38, printed September 28, 1939



## HISTORY OF THE HANCEVILLE TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

In the fall of 1885, two men were placed in North Alabama to found Lutheran Congregations of the Missouri Synod.

One was located in Garden City, then a thriving little city which had received many of its inhabitants from Chicago after the great fire. Rev. C. Burkart of Detroit, Michigan, was placed there. Rev. Engelbert in Cullman, both working in the center of the large field recently solemnized by many Lutherans of the North. Pastor Burkart also made visits to Birmingham to found a congregation. Rev. Engelbert to Hanceville. Both men served other places also.

The official statistics of Synod for 1886 gives Rev. Burkart one congregation, two preaching places, total 180 baptized, Christian Day School of 20 pupils. Rev. Engelbert had two congregations including Hanceville, two preaching places and five hundred baptized.

In the Spring of 1888 Rev. Burkart was called to Lutherville, Arkansas.

Rev. C. W. Lawes succeeded him. He served Hanceville and Garden City congregations from 1888 to 1891, followed by Rev. H. Peiper, serving from 1892 - 1896. Statistics in 1892 show Hanceville and Garden City baptized 543, communicants 290, and Christian Day School of 73 pupils.

Trinity Lutheran Church is a member of the Missouri Synod which at present has 1,350,000 members, 4,000 pastors, 13 colleges, 5 seminaries, 2,495 theological students, 1,354 Christian Day Schools and 1,000 teachers.

Trinity congregation has continued to grow steadily since that time served by a succession of faithful pastors.

Services and Sunday School are held every Sunday. It has an active Ladies Society and Walther League.

The present minister, Rev. Arthur Graf, was ordained pastor in 1938. His members truly feel that God has sent them a true Shepherd to lead their congregation onward. Abiding, steadfast firm and sure, the teachings of the Word endure. Blessed be he that trusts this steadfast word. His anchor holds in Christ the Lord.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR CHURCH

taken from

the dedication booklet of the latest Trinity  
Evangelical Lutheran Church building, dedicated  
on January 27, 1952.



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR CHURCH

Trinity Lutheran Church was organized in 1885 by its first pastor, Rev. C. Burkart, who was at that time stationed at Garden City as a Missionary at Large for the Southern District. He served the Garden City and Hanceville Lutherans from January 1885 to July 1885 as a Student Pastor. The first church building was erected that fall and winter and dedicated in February, 1886.

According to the oldest minutes of Trinity Church, its first officially called pastor was the Rev. F. Engelbert, to whom the congregation extended its first call on April 11, 1886. Although Pastor Engelbert was already serving a congregation in Cullman and two other preaching places, he accepted the call to serve also the Hanceville congregation. He served the congregation from the fall of 1885 to the fall of 1887.

On October 24, 1887, Pastor C. Burkart opened the first full time Christian Day School at Hanceville. At this time he had an assistant in the person of student Emil Meyer from Springfield, who taught the school at Garden City while Pastor Burkart daily walked the four mile stretch back and forth from Garden City to Hanceville, teaching the Hanceville School. During this time he also served both locations as their regularly called pastor.

In 1928 the interior of our first church was remodeled. This church has served Trinity congregation as both a house of worship and a school room.

As early as 1929, our people realized the importance of concentrating more and more on the English language. They felt that their's was the duty to provide for the sheep entrusted to them, and to also receive those sheep who were not of their particular tongue of which our Lord also said: "They also shall hear My voice." During Pastor Graf's ministry, German services were held but twice a month. On December 25, 1944, the last German service, with communion, was conducted by Pastor Hasz.

The Walther League was organized approximately twenty years ago. They were received into membership of the International Walther League on January 14, 1939. They have pledged themselves for a substantial amount for our new house of worship.

The Ladies Aid has played no small part in the history of Trinity congregation. Our present organization was started in 1937. It was through the efforts of Mrs. Emma Burkart that the Ladies Aid was begun. In March of 1937 an interested group of our lady members met in the home of Mrs. Emma Burkart, where they effected the founding of our present organization. Charter members who are still with us are: Mrs. Emma Burkart, Mrs. Albert Jochum, Mrs. Emma Bland, Mrs. Albert Burkart, Mrs. George Burkart, Mrs. Henry Warren, Mrs. J. N. McNutt, and Miss Lena Seibert.

The name of this organization was later changed to the Lutheran Women's Missionary Guild.

This group has been very energetic and have taken a very active part in the material workings of our congregation.

As early as 1942 the need for a new church became apparent. In this year under the influence of the Rev. A. E. Graf the first building fund drive was conducted. Approximately \$2,000 was collected during Pastor Graf's stay in Hanceville.

During the pastorate of Rev. R. E. Hasz, who served our congregation from 1944 until 1948, the pledges and contributions for the building fund were increased to a total of \$9,000.

In the fall of 1949 after the installation of the present Pastor, definite plans were presented and ratified to erect the new house of worship.

Mr. Thomas West Gardner of Nashville, Tennessee, was employed as the architect and presented Trinity congregation with the church plans. The cornerstone laying ceremonies were conducted on Sunday, March 11, 1951, immediately following the morning worship service.

Mr. L. T. Wamp of Hanceville was employed by Trinity congregation to supervise and direct the construction of our new building.

The church which we are dedicating today is of Gothic architecture and consists of the following: The nave, chancel, choir loft, pastor's study, social hall, Sunday School rooms, kitchen, narthex, and retiring rooms. The nave together with the choir loft will seat 266. The building covers 4,129 square feet. The present value of the church is approximately \$45,000. New church pews are yet to be installed.



PASTORS

of

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Pastors of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

C. Burkart

F. Engelbert

W. L. Lauer

C. E. Scheibe

H. Pieper

W. G. Hussmann

H. Meibohm

G. E. Luedke

M. Neirmann

F. W. Weidmann

F. Hassenpflug

E. H. Lange

M. Wolf

A. Mueller

H. E. Wallner

A. E. Graf

R. E. Hasz

E. Jankens

M. Buerger

F. Beversdorf











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